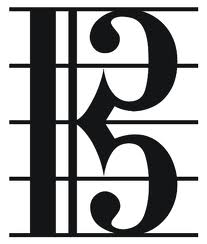
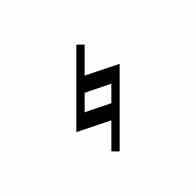
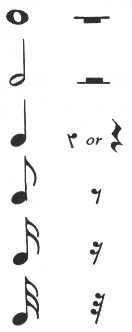
Music Theory Basics – Study Guide

1. **Below are the three most often used clefs and accidentals:**

   # http://www.signnetwork.com/decals/Decals/SYMBOLS/images/Symbol%20(141).jpgTreble (G) Clef Bass (F) Clef Alto (C) Clef sharp natural flat

A **sharp** raises a pitch (note) by a half step; a **flat** lowers a pitch by a **half step** (the distance from one piano key to the very next). Sharps and flats are also found in **key signatures** – patterns of sharps or flats that appear on the staff and indicate that certain notes are to be consistently raised or lowered.

1. **Rhythmic notation.** A **note** is a symbol that gives the duration of a sound and its pitch; a **rest** is a symbol that gives the duration of a span of silence. Below are common note values and their corresponding rest values.



Whole

Half

Quarter

Eighth

Sixteenth

Thirty-second

1. **Time Signatures.** The top number is the number of units (beats per measure). The bottom number is the length (value) of the unit. Below are some commonly used signatures:

**2/4 3/4 4/4 3/8 12/8 2/2 3/2**

1. **Common tempo and dynamic markings:**

*Allegro –* fast

*Adagio –* slow

*Accelerando –* becoming faster

*Ritardando –* becoming slower

*Forte (f)–* loud

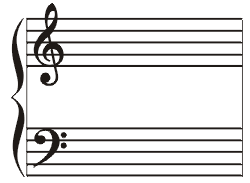
*Mezzo forte (mf)–* moderately loud

*Piano (p)–* soft

*Crescendo –* becoming louder

*Decrescendo –* becoming softer

1. **Notation on the Staff**. In music notation, a **staff** is used to indicate the precise pitch desired. A staff consists of five lines and four spaces, but it may be extended indefinitely through the use of **ledger lines**.



Above is a **grand staff** - two staves joined by a brace, with the top and bottom staves using treble and bass clefs, respectively. (A clef appears at the beginning of the staff and indicates what pitches are associated with which lines and spaces.) The top line is in Treble (G) Clef; the bottom line is in Bass (F) Clef. Notes are lettered alphabetically (A-G) from top to bottom, alternating lines and spaces. The treble symbol circles **G above middle C** (the second line from the bottom, upper staff), while the bass clef centers around **F below** **middle C** (second line from the top, lower staff).